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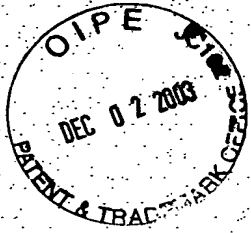
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COMBINED DECLARATION, POWER OF ATTORNEY AND PETITION

I, the inventor,

Name: Roger Marcel HUMBEL  
Residence: Baden-Dättwil, Switzerland  
Post Office Address: Pilgerstrasse 6  
CH-5405 Baden-Dättwil, Switzerland  
Citizenship: Switzerland

declare that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the attached specification and claims and I verily believe that I am the original, first and sole inventor or discoverer of the invention or discovery in

SAFETY-RELEASE BINDING

described and claimed in the attached specification; that this Continuation-in-Part Patent Application in part discloses and claims subject matter disclosed in my earlier-filed PCT International Application PCT/CH02/00064, filed 04 February 2002, and my earlier-filed Swiss Patent Application Serial No. 233/01, filed 05 February 2001, both of which I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C., Section 119; that as to the subject matter of this application which is common to said earlier application, I do not know and do not believe that the same was ever known or used in the United States before my invention or discovery thereof; that to the best of my knowledge and belief the invention of said common subject matter has not been in public use or on sale in the United States more than one year prior to said earlier application or patented or described in any printed publication in any country before my invention thereof or more than one year prior to said earlier application, or patented or made the subject of an inventor's certificate in any foreign country prior to the date of said earlier application or an application filed by myself or my legal representatives or assigns more than twelve months prior to said earlier application in this country; and that no application for patent or inventor's certificate on the invention or discovery of said common subject matter has been filed by me or my legal representatives or assigns in any country foreign to the United States, except as follows:

| Country     | Number         | Filing Date      |
|-------------|----------------|------------------|
| PCT         | PCT/CH02/00064 | 04 February 2002 |
| Switzerland | 233/01         | 05 February 2001 |

that as to the subject matter of this application which is not common to said earlier application, I do not know and do not believe that the same was ever known or used in the United States before my invention or discovery thereof; that to the best of my knowledge and belief the invention thereof has not been in public use or on sale in the United States more than one year prior to this application or patented or described in any printed publication in any country before my invention thereof or more than one year prior to this application, or patented or made the subject of an inventor's certificate in any foreign country prior to the

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date of this application on an application filed by myself or my legal representatives or assigns more than twelve months prior to this application in this country; that I acknowledge my duty to disclose information of which I am aware which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.56(a); and that no application for patent or inventor's certificate on this invention or discovery has been filed by me or my legal representatives or assigns in any country foreign to the United States, except as follows:

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Number</u>  | <u>Filing Date</u> |
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| PCT            | PCT/CH02/00064 | 04 February 2002   |
| Switzerland    | 233/01         | 05 February 2001   |

**POWER OF ATTORNEY**

I hereby appoint the following attorneys to prosecute this application and transact all business in the United States Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

|                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Thomas W. Speckman  | Registration No. 22,617 |
| Douglas H. Pauley   | Registration No. 33,295 |
| Maxwell J. Petersen | Registration No. 32,772 |
| Nick C. Kottis      | Registration No. 31,974 |
| Kevin D. Erickson   | Registration No. 38,736 |
| Roland W. Norris    | Registration No. 32,799 |
| Melanie I. Rauch    | Registration No. 40,924 |
| Eric T. Krigschke   | Registration No. 42,769 |
| Margaret M. Crosby  | Registration No. 40,969 |
| Mark D. Swanson     | Registration No. 48,498 |
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**AUTHORIZATION OF ATTORNEYS TO ACCEPT  
AND FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS FROM REPRESENTATIVE**

The undersigned to this declaration and power of attorney hereby authorizes the U.S. attorneys named above to accept and follow instructions from

Patentanwaltsbüro Feldmann AG  
Kanalstrasse 17  
CH-8152 Glatbrugg  
Switzerland

as to any actions to be taken in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office regarding this application without direct communication between the U.S. attorneys and the undersigned. In the event of a change in the persons from whom instructions may be taken, the U.S. attorneys will be so notified by the undersigned.

**PETITION**

Wherefore I Pray that Letters Patent be granted to me for the invention or discovery described and claimed in the attached specification and claims, and I hereby subscribe my name to the attached specification and claims, Declaration, Power of Attorney and this Petition.

**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

23.10.2003

Date

Roger Marcel HUMBEL

Roger Marcel HUMBEL

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